Inspections by General Managers in Railways

2326. SHRI V. HANUMANTHA RAO: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any directions have been issued to General Managers of Railways to step up field inspections to maintain desired level of alertness amongst Railway functionaries;

(b) if so, the details of such directions;

(c) when the directions were issued;

(d) whether these directions are actually being implemented at the Zonal Level; and

(e) how does the Railway Board monitor the faithful adherence and implementation of this directive?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Instructions are reiterated from time to time far stepping of field inspections to increase alertness.

(c) Recently, twice such instructions were issued on 22.11.96 and 27.11.96.

(d) Yes, Sir.

(e) Through monthly reports received from the General Managers.

Sub-standard level of Primary Education

2327. PROF. (SHRIMATI) BHARATI RAY: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether at the primary school level the education provided is genrally substandard, teaching casual and infrastructure looking; and

(b) if so, the steps Government are planning to take to improve the system?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI MUHI RAM SAIKIA): (a) and (b) There is considerable variation in the standards of primary education, quality of teachers and availability of infrastructure in primary schools across the country.

In pursuance of the National Policy on Education, 1986 and its Programme of Action, the Central and State Governments have taken several measures to improve the primary education system. These include the following:

(i) Operation Blackboard for improvement of infrastructure in primary and upper primary schools; provision of additional teachers and supply of essential teaching learning materials;

(ii) Scheme for strengthening of pre-service and in-service training of elementary school teachers by establishing District Institutes of Education and Training (DIET);

(iii) introduction of minimum levels of learning in primary schools to improve learning levels;

(iv) implementation of several internationally assisted projects for improving the primary education system viz, District Primary Education Programme (DPEP) in 11 States, Bihar Education Project (BEP), Uttar Pradesh Basic Education Project, Lok Jumbish and Shiksha Karmi Projects in Rajasthan.

Financial Assistance to Museums

2328. SHRI K.M. KHAN: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Department of Culture has invited applications for financial assistance under the scehme of promotion and strengthening of regional and local museums during 1996-97;

(b) if so, the details thereof with number of applications received, State and Territory-wise;

(c) the criteria precsribed for grant of financial assistance;

(d) whether such applications have been received from minorities also; and

(e) if so, the details thereof and if not, the steps proposed to be taken to call for such applications?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI S.R.